

A4 48. The method of claim 20 wherein the steps of presenting present the first and second networked sales interfaces as web interfaces.

In the Drawings

Please amend Fig. 1 as shown in the attached red-marked sheet. A copy is being provided to the official draftsman under separate cover.

REMARKS

These remarks are in reply to the Office Action mailed June 5, 2002. The Office Action includes a requirement for an abstract on a separate sheet, and such an abstract is attached to this Amendment. The Office Action also requests that the drawings be corrected to include textual labels, and a redmarked sheet including proposed corrections is attached. The Office Action further objects to a dependency error in claim 4, and applicant has corrected this error.

The invention, as now presented in amended claim 1, features a sales system for coupling to a communications network. The sales system includes a first sales interface at a first network address, with the first sales interface including a first set of user interface elements. The sales system also includes a second sales interface at a second network address, with the second sales interface including a second set of user interface elements. A sales server at a third network address operates the first and second sales interfaces while providing an impression that they are being operated by different entities. A customization interface is responsive to user input to define the sets of user interface elements.

Systems according to this aspect of the invention are advantageous in that they can allow for seamless outsourcing of network-based sales operations. Outsourcing allows a specialized application service provider to provide its clients with a high level of network sales operations expertise, which would otherwise have to be developed in-house. And by managing the outsourcing of sales activities for a variety of clients, the provider can take advantage of economies of scale that would not be available to its clients individually.

Systems according to the invention can also allow providers to provide their outsourcing services in such a way that their clients retain their brand identity. Because the customization interface allows the different entities to customize the look and feel of their interfaces, they can design these interfaces to operate like their own web sites, and to conform to their own brand identities. This allows application service providers to help to operate a client's site and perform

related tasks without giving users the impression that they are being handed over to a different organization.

Claim 1 was rejected over Holden. Holden presents a description of eBay's "About Me" feature. This feature allows eBay's users to create pages about themselves that are accessible through eBay's auction site.

But eBay's "About Me" feature does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of claim 1 as now amended. Holden does not disclose a sales server that operates two different sales interfaces while providing an impression that they are being operated by different entities. Instead, it is quite clear that all of the eBay users that create "About Me" pages are using the eBay system. The "About Me" pages are located at a web address within the eBay domain and the pages include eBay brand identifiers. A user viewing these web pages therefore would not come away with the impression that these pages were operated by different entities. This showcase model follows a completely different approach from the seamless application service provider approach that the claimed invention can provide for. And nowhere in any of the prior art of record is there any suggestion to modify the Holden system in such a way as to cause it to include a sales server that operates two different sales interfaces while providing an impression that they are being operated by different entities, as now claimed in claim 1 as amended.

Claim 20 as now amended also distinguishes over the prior art of record for at least reasons similar to those advanced in support of claim 1.

Claims 27-48 are new and their examination is respectfully requested.

This application should now be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0750.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marked-Up Version to Show Changes Made

1. (Amended) A sales system for coupling to a communications network, comprising:
a first sales interface at a first network address, the first sales interface including a first set of user interface elements,
a second sales interface at a second network address, the second sales interface including a second set of user interface elements, and
a sales server at a third network address that operates the first and second sales interfaces while providing an impression that they are being operated by different entities, wherein the sales server includes a customization interface responsive to user input to define the first and second sets of user interface elements.
elements to provide the impression that they are being operated by the different entities.

4. (Amended) The system of claim 12 wherein the templates are constructed and adapted to receive scripting commands.

20. (Amended) A sales method for operation through a communications network, comprising:
receiving customization commands from a first accountholder,
receiving customization commands from a second accountholder,
presenting a first networked sales interface through the network for the first accountholder based on ~~the item categorization~~ input received from the first accountholder, and
presenting a second networked sales interface through the network for the second accountholder based on ~~the item categorization~~ input received from the second ~~accountholder~~ accountholder, and
wherein the steps of presenting are performed by a provider for the accountholders, and present the first and second networked sales interfaces in such a way that they provide an impression that they are operated by the accountholders.